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## [Photo Galleries](#)

### [Searching for an Underground Generation in Karachi, Pakistan](#)

The largest city in Pakistan, Karachi can be a violent and conservative place. And yet, a group of artists and activists are trying to break through the status quo en route to freer expression and thought. Tonje Thilesen documents Karachi's underground music scene in this in-depth photo essay and travelogue.

- [Electric Fling](#)

## [The New Miami Sound Machines](#)

Andy Beta travels to III Points Festival in Miami to take in the city's famously fluid music culture and highlight burgeoning local dance acts including Telescope Thieves, Bedside, and Psychic Mirrors.

- [Interviews](#)

## [The Indivisible DAWN](#)

As she readies *RED•emp•tion*, the final part of her current trilogy of albums, fearless R&B experimenter Dawn Richard talks with Rachel Syme about navigating the spaces between mainstream and underground, finding inspiration in literary titans like Oscar Wilde, and being the hero of her own story.

- [Profiles](#)

## [All Apologies: DIIV's Zachary Cole Smith Returns From the Brink](#)

When DIIV first broke out four years ago, frontman Zachary Cole Smith was a champion of dreamy guitar rock. Then everything cracked apart. Written in the wake of a very public heroin bust, DIIV's new album tells a cautionary tale. By Jeremy Gordon.

- [Articles](#)

## [Living Rooms: Inside Mexico City's Acid House](#)

In the second installment of Living Rooms, a series that looks at DIY clubs around the world, writer Gabriela Jauregui and photographers Ramiro Chaves, Florencia Diaz, and Daniel Hernandez visit Acid House, a venue in Mexico City.

- [Rising](#)

## [Supa Dupa Fly: Kamaiyah Bosses Up](#)

Inspired by the idiosyncratic brilliance of '90s artists like Missy Elliott and TLC, 20-year-old Oakland rapper Kamaiyah is looking to revive that era's sense of originality while putting her own skills as an MC to the fore: "I want young women to know that they don't have to be a sex symbol to get love."

- [Podcasts](#)

## [5-10-15-20: Chvrches](#)

Scottish synth-pop act Chvrches talk to Amy Phillips about the music of their lives in this special podcast edition of our 5-10-15-20 interview series.

- [\*\*Interviews\*\*](#)

[\*\*Rostam's Next-Level Art Music\*\*](#)

Best known as the musical engine behind Vampire Weekend, Rostam Batmanglij has become a go-to producer and songwriter, working with the likes of Carly Rae Jepsen and Charli XCX. Following the release of a new solo single, he talks to Ryan Dombal about where he's taking his sound next.

- [\*\*Podcasts\*\*](#)

[\*\*A Conversation With Carrie Brownstein at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago\*\*](#)

As part of Pitchfork and MCA Chicago's In Sight Out series, Carrie Brownstein reads a passage from her memoir, *Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl*, and talks to Jessica Hopper about her writing process.

- [\*\*Articles\*\*](#)

[\*\*Anthems for the Moon: David Bowie's Sci-Fi Explorations\*\*](#)

From “Space Oddity” through “Blackstar,” David Bowie was pop music’s ambassador to the realms of science fiction and fantasy. Jason Heller explains how the shapeshifting Starman was inspired by the dark sci-fi experiments of the space age.

- [\*\*Staff Lists\*\*](#)

[\*\*The 27 Albums We're Most Excited for in 2016\*\*](#)

Here is a list of albums from vital artists who are supposed to gift us with new music this year; we know more about some than about others, but all of them are making us very optimistic for the future.

- [\*\*Afterword\*\*](#)

[\*\*David Bowie\*\*](#)

David Bowie was the ultimate cultural connector, envisioning pop not as a closed loop but rather an infinite network of intellectual curiosities that spanned underground music, avant-garde art, and left-field literature. By Stuart Berman.

- [\*\*Interviews\*\*](#)

[\*\*The Secret Language of Laundry: Inside Matmos' Washing\*\*](#)

## [Machine Album](#)

The eternally curious experimental duo talk to Philip Sherburne about the zen majesty of doing laundry and why they decided to base their new record on the sounds of their own washing machine.

- [5-10-15-20](#)

## [Corin Tucker](#)

In this podcast edition of our 5-10-15-20 interview series, Jenn Pelly talks with Sleater-Kinney's Corin Tucker about the music of her life: skipping prom to see Fugazi, loving (and then collaborating with) R.E.M., being inspired by Beyoncé, and more.

- [Interviews](#)

## [Tinashe's World Domination Plan](#)

After establishing herself as an ambassador for billowing, untethered R&B, Tinashe is looking to expand her sound—and reach—on her forthcoming second album, *Joyride*. By Eric Torres.

- [Staff Lists](#)

## [Readers' Poll Results 2015](#)

The Pitchfork Readers Poll features your picks for the best (and worst) in the world of music, including your choices for Top Albums and Top Tracks, along with Most Underrated and Overrated Albums, Best New Artists, Best Musician Twitters, plus your answers to a number of either/or questions.

- [Interviews](#)

## [Animal Collective's Primitive Future](#)

With their 10th album coming next month, the experimental rock stalwarts talk to Jeremy Gordon about finding inspiration in dinosaurs and cavemen, making connections between red and blue America, and whether they have anything left to prove.

- [Staff Lists](#)

## [The Year in Rap 2015](#)

Jeff Weiss details Drake's two high-profile rap wars this year—the hot one with Meek Mill and the cold one with Kendrick Lamar—and how his flouting of traditional hip-hop ethics runs parallel to our accelerating world of nihilist-flavored capitalism.

- **[Staff Lists](#)**

**[The Best Experimental Albums of 2015](#)**

The Out Door columnists Marc Masters and Grayson Haver Currin select their 20 favorite experimental releases of the year, featuring everything from wordless hymns sung by ghosts, to brain-massaging minimalism, to solitary field recordings, to a symphony of cicadas.

- **[Staff Lists](#)**

**[The Year in Punk 2015](#)**

At its best, punk still provides a powerful outlet for unheard voices. This year, two new bands—G.L.O.S.S. and Downtown Boys—stomped on the status quo while opening up spaces in punk for those who have often been shut out. By Jenn Pelly.

- **[Staff Lists](#)**

**[The Best Metal Albums of 2015](#)**

Our Show No Mercy columnist Brandon Stosuy and other Pitchfork contributors count down their favorite metal releases of the year, including records by Deafheaven, High on Fire, Prurient, Baroness, Bell Witch, Tribulation, Sannhet, and more.

- **[Staff Lists](#)**

**[The Year in Lyrics 2015](#)**

The best lyrics stick in your head like the best scenes in a movie. To honor some of the most indelible lines of 2015—by the Weeknd, Courtney Barnett, Young Thug, and others—we asked visual artist Laura Breiling to bring them to life.

- **[Photo Galleries](#)**

**[The Year in Photos 2015](#)**

Check out some of our favorite portraits and live shots from across the year, spotlighting artists including Sleater-Kinney, Grace Jones, Vince Staples, Thom Yorke, Lykke Li, Iceage, Lauryn Hill, Perfume Genius, Shamir, and Jamie xx.

- **[Staff Lists](#)**

## **The Year in Electronic Music 2015**

Marked by the exhilarating formlessness of artists like Arca, Elysia Crampton, and Lotic, this year's vanguard electronic music resisted bite-sized, EDM-style consumption as it offered an endless malleability that spoke to our culture's increasingly fluid sense of identity. By Philip Sherburne.

- **Staff Lists**

## **The 100 Best Tracks of 2015**

From Drake's dominance to Adele's return, Tame Impala's blissful psych to Kendrick Lamar's politically charged hip-hop, 2015 marked another diverse and strong year for music. These are our picks for the best songs of the year.

- **Staff Lists**

## **The Year in Quotes 2015**

A collection of our favorite quotables from the interviews we did this year, including Madonna on modern loneliness, Earl Sweatshirt on proverbs, Bradford Cox on dogs, Jamie xx on (not) smoking weed, Sufjan Stevens on God, and much more.

- **Interviews**

## **Life on the Line: A Telephone Conversation With Erykah Badu**

Ryan Dombal gives the oracle of soul a call to talk about her stunning recent duet with André 3000, reaching out to a new generation, and her volunteer work helping people come to terms with death.

- **Staff Lists**

## **The Best of Pitchfork.tv 2015**

This year, Pitchfork.tv has brought you all kinds of bingeable shows, from our in-depth look at Slowdive's classic album *Souvlaki*, to the best live footage anywhere, to Vince Staples talking about why having pets is overrated. Tune in here for the best music you can watch in 2015.

- **Staff Lists**

## **Guest List: Best of 2015**

We invited artists to discuss their favorite music of the year—be it a song, album, event, or otherwise. From Holly Herndon's time in Poland to Fetty Wap's graciousness over "Trap Queen"'s success, here is Pitchfork's 2015 Guest List.



## • [Staff Lists](#)

### [The Best Music Videos of 2015](#)

From Nicki and Beyoncé’s ecstatic Coachella road trip, to David Bowie’s haunting interstellar hallucination, to Oneohtrix Point Never’s epic LARP-ing battle, to Charli XCX’s psychotic death-by-selfie freak show, to Kendrick’s powerful levitating act, here are our 20 favorite videos of the year.

## [Starter](#)

### 10 Essential Japanese Netlabels

A breakdown of Japan’s thriving netlabel scene—a web-native realm where artists create their own aesthetic rules and distribute their music as they please.

By  
[Patrick St. Michel](#)  
, December 3, 2014

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Artwork by [inumoto](#) and featured on the cover of Go-qualia’s [Girl of Synesthesia](#), the first release by Japanese netlabel Bunkai-Kei Records

London online label [PC Music](#) has become a much-buzzed-about—and divisive—entity over the course of 2014 via their wonky dance-pop releases, Web 1.0 aesthetics, and gratis distribution model. Yet there’s at least one place on Earth where PC Music’s sonic and visual input wouldn’t be jarring, but rather commonplace among an ever-growing community going strong for more than a decade now: Japan’s netlabel scene. A “netlabel” is a



music imprint existing primarily on the Internet, where users can download all releases for free in digital format. In most cases, netlabels license all songs under creative commons licenses, encouraging fledgling producers to remix them however they'd like. PC Music is the first Western netlabel to make significant waves in the English media, but the most influential Japanese netlabels have already helped shepherd a new generation of producers to greater awareness while shaping the future of popular Japanese music.

USYN: "Daisy" (via MarginalRec.) (via [SoundCloud](#))

The first Japanese netlabel, [Minus N](#), emerged in 2003, and welcomed submissions from all countries, making it far more popular outside of Japan than within. Subsequently, plenty of Japanese netlabels emerged and continued embracing a no-borders mindset, but the appearance of [Maltine Records](#) in 2005 helped birth the country's contemporary online-music scene. Started by two high school freshmen who just wanted to share their fidgety dance music, Maltine reached out to budding producers sharing tracks on MySpace and the popular image-board 2chan (the inspiration for America's 4chan), offering them a chance to release EPs and albums via their Internet-only imprint. Maltine embraced all mutations of electronic music—starting out favoring breakbeats and gabber, but soon welcoming house, techno, and sliced-and-diced anime music into the fold—eventually creating a musical universe all their own. Soon enough, others followed their lead, taking advantage of this limitless new realm.

The movement wasn't necessarily a kickback against popular J-pop—many artists on netlabels support mainstream acts—but rather a chance for amateur producers with no real way into the Japanese music industry to try to be heard. And the digital door isn't open to just music makers: many young visual artists and graphic designers have had their work used as album covers within the netlabel community, while others have helped design the [colorful](#), [attention-monopolizing](#), and [sometimes-browser-crippling websites](#) for certain full-lengths.

mitsushige: "††† yAmAgAtA †††" (via Trekkie Trax) (via [SoundCloud](#))

The netlabel scene grew larger thanks to the rise of social-networking sites, and the more established outfits started crossing into real life with parties featuring artists who once only shined in .ZIP form. Even live, the Internet isn't absent—at Maltine's club nights, there are always designated computer corners where punters can use their devices and charge phones, while more daring attendees clutch their laptops on the dancefloor and livestream themselves enjoying the event... often to people across the floor from them.

**Watch footage from a Maltine Records party from earlier this year in Tokyo:**

2014 0505 東京



Now, netlabel culture and artists are crossing over to the mainstream. A new generation of producers who got their start through Web-only labels such as [Avec Avec](#), [Yoshino Yoshikawa](#), and [Fazeroack](#) have earned work producing music for major-label pop stars. Maltine has collaborated with popular J-pop group Tokyo Girls' Style for the [Maltine Girls' Wave](#) project, while also hosting releases from non-Japanese artists like England's [bo en](#), Texas' [Xyloid](#), and Los Angeles' [Meishi Smile](#). Yusuke Kawai, aka tofubeats, has become the biggest crossover performer to date, joining Warner Bros. Japan as a solo artist, teaming up with Mad Decent singer LIZ, and [offering a mix](#) for the BBC's "Diplo and Friends" show in the process.

Pa's Lam System: "Bit by Bit" (via Maltine Records) (via [SoundCloud](#))

Despite these success stories, the Japanese netlabel community tends to be very transient. New labels start all the time and vanish into the digital ether just as quickly; browsing the "links" pages of still-thriving netlabels leads to lots of 404 errors or domain-for-sale pages. Minus N's site is now riddled with script mistakes. But despite the fleeting nature of these smaller operations, the Japanese netlabel scene has created a welcoming online world where anyone with wi-fi can create a unique aesthetic and then set it free.

The following list runs down the 10 most noteworthy contemporary Japanese netlabels and some of their best tracks:



### [Maltine Records](#)

bo en: "Miss You" (via [SoundCloud](#))

The biggest and most well-known netlabel in Japan started life as a way for a pair of high school freshmen to share their homemade tracks. Launched in 2005 by Tomohiro Konuta and a friend going by the name Syem, the online imprint served as a way to release dance and pop music made by like-minded artists found online. Today, Maltine boasts over 130 releases—all available [here](#) for free download—and has garnered enough clout to [collaborate with major-label J-pop singers](#) and put on big [IRL events](#). They've become a favorite of various non-Japanese artists as well, including Canadian producer Ryan Hemsworth, who regularly features the label's music in his live sets and mixes. Despite growing attention, the label's open-minded attitude remains, allowing Maltine to release electronic music blurring all sorts of lines, from 2-step to Jersey Club approximations to indie-pop while weaving in nerdier aspects of Japanese pop culture through video game noises and anime samples.



### [Bunkai-Kei Records](#)

mus.hiba: "hitomi" [ft. Abigail Press] (via [SoundCloud](#))

		<a href="#">Sherbet</a> by Smamy
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Alongside Maltine, Bunkai-Kei is the other big-name netlabel going in 2014. In a scene where digital outlets tend to disappear as quickly as they pop up, Bunkai-Kei has lasted for years and also achieved the netlabel milestone of hosting live shows around Tokyo, most notably the [Out of Dots](#) show at the capital's famous club Womb. Unlike Maltine's cartoon-embracing spirit, though, the artists on Bunkai-Kei give off a slightly more serious air, with most releases leaning towards ambient and glitch. Still, they aren't afraid to highlight whatever electronic music catches their attention, and they've even [released an album](#) courtesy of famous [Vocaloid](#) producer kz, albeit one where the character's digi-singing was sliced up. Recently, they've also embraced more human voices, ranging from Tokyo singer Smamy, to adult-video-actor Yura Sakura, to Brooklyn-based Abigail Press, who appears on Bunkai-Kei's latest album, courtesy of woozy producer mus.hiba.

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## Bump Foot

tatsu: "hidden"

Seimei & Taimei: "Mediterranean Blue"

Bump Foot boasts the most intimidating catalog of all Japanese netlabels—more than 400 releases appear in their archives, which date back to 2005. The people running the site make it a tiny bit easier to navigate through their stacks, dividing albums up into two types. “Bump Side” uploads are based on techno and house music, though the producers featured in that category aren’t afraid to bend those definitions—as long as someone could dance to it, it’s bumping. “Foot Side,” meanwhile, highlights music meant to be absorbed. Bump Foot resembles early-day netlabels in its sprawling selection, and is the most international of the bunch, with the number of foreign acts well outnumbering the domestic side.



### [MarginalRec.](#)

Searchlight: "Beyond the Night" [ft. Chanmomo] (via [SoundCloud](#))

One of the key concepts of Japanese netlabel culture is connecting people who normally wouldn't have a chance to interact, and Tokyo-based MarginalRec. takes that principle very seriously. They sometimes throw parties, dubbed Another Weekender, at clubs as a way for listeners to come together and hear their take on electronic music. They also stream these nights out live online for those who can't experience it in person and put on [a weekly Ustream show](#) every Monday. The label's music runs from remixes of popular J-pop songs, to anthemic floor fillers, to fidgety built-for-headphones numbers.

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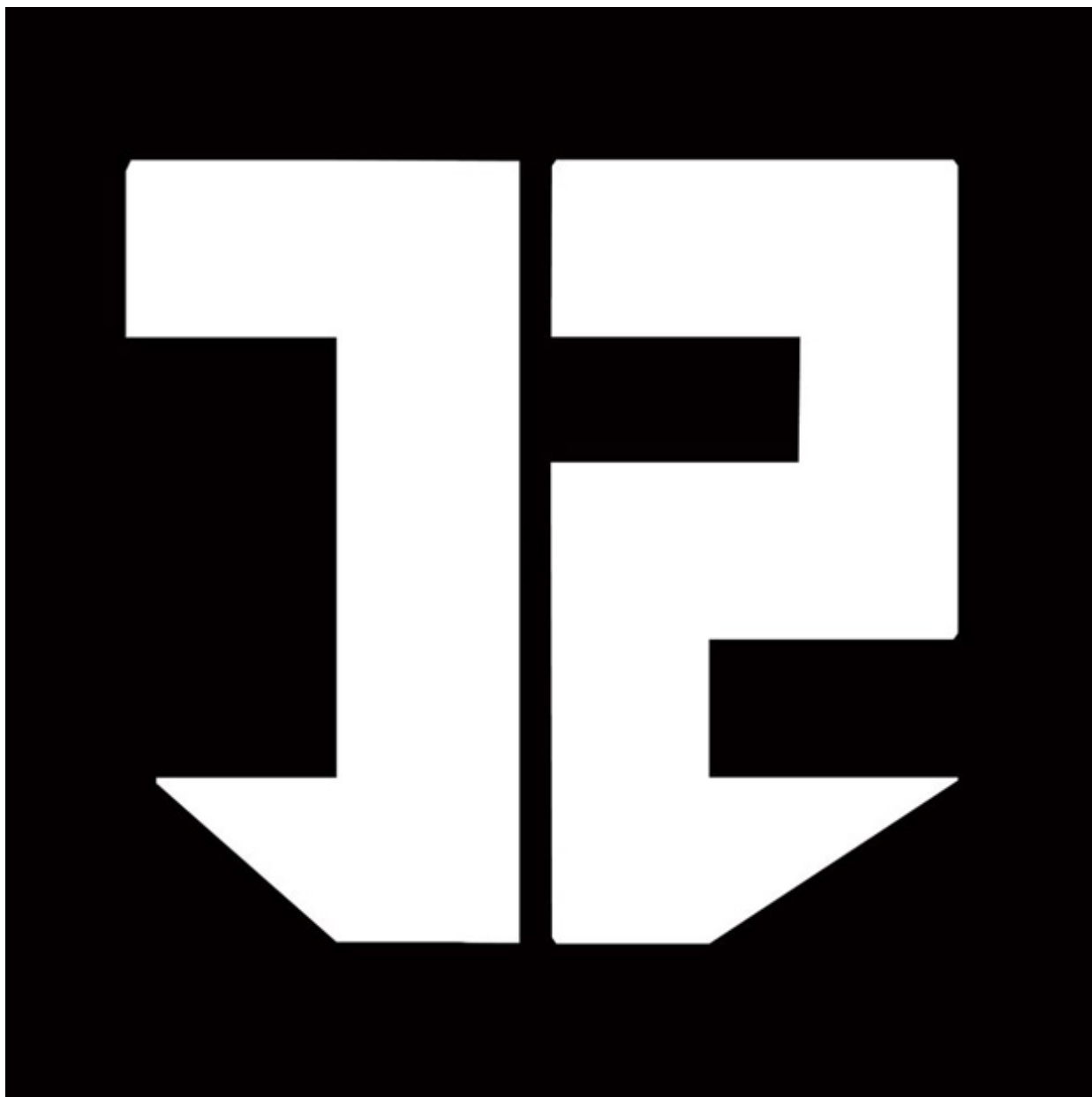
### [ALTEMA Records](#)

fu\_mou: "Green Night Parade" (via [SoundCloud](#))

Leggysalad: "entrance" (via [SoundCloud](#))

There's a heavy overlap between Japan's online music scenes and anime communities, and the art direction many netlabels embrace can sometimes skew a little too [moe](#). For those who still raise an eyebrow at Japanese animation, ALTEMA Records strikes a nice balance between [otaku](#) and general-audience serving. Co-founder sir etok doesn't shy away from his love for anime, and the covers of many of their albums feature cutesy drawings, but the music within takes many shapes. Some are built around nothing but samples from '90s programs, while others swerve into brostep territory, or heady IDM.

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## [Trekkie Trax](#)

Carpainter: "Kick Back" (via [SoundCloud](#))

Few netlabels have shot up the ranks as quickly as Trekkie Trax, a Tokyo-based crew who have gone from cramped clubs to having their own radio show in just two years. Trekkie Trax started as a party held in Tokyo's Akihabara neighborhood called Under 20, because the DJs hosting the get-together were still in their teens. They soon established an online outpost to release their music, and began recruiting new producers. The artists released by Trekkie Trax embrace contemporary forms of dance music—among their catalog are releases devoted to juke, 2-step, brostep, and grime-descendant war dub. In 2014, they've been getting even more attention both at home and abroad, as members of the label now host occasional radio programs on Tokyo's block.fm, while the Helsinki-based dance label Top Billin [released](#) a special compilation of Trekkie Trax songs this spring.

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## [Otherman Records](#)

KlitoriX: "You Only Fuck Twice" (via [SoundCloud](#))

gigandect: "divorce" (via [SoundCloud](#))

Far and away the most aggressive-sounding Japanese netlabel going, Otherman Records emerged in 2010 as an online stop for breakcore music. Though, even from their very first compilation album, it was never that simple. Otherman highlights all abrasive dance music, from manic chiptune to drum 'n' bass freak outs that push the boundaries of what a club goer could actually dance to. (Most extreme of all may be their [chiptune Christmas album](#).) Some of the label's earliest contributors have gone on to increased attention as of late, including producers Miii and Gigandect (the latter being invited to [take part](#) in Maltine's collaboration with popular J-pop group Tokyo Girls' Style), as they continue to seek out exciting young track makers who aren't afraid to get confrontational with their music.

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### [Ano\(t\)raks](#)



[Lover Lover](#) by Slow Beach

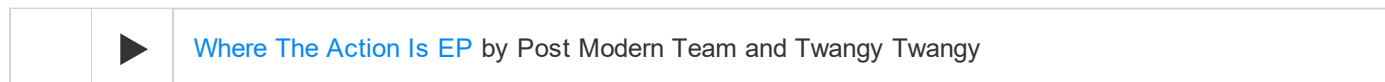
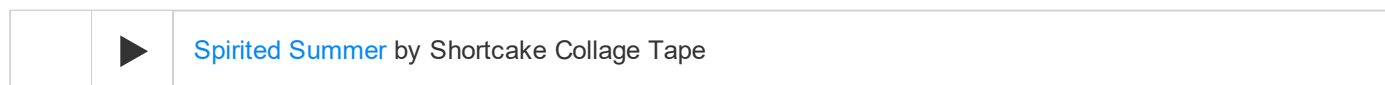


[\(Jesus has given and\) xxx.EP](#) by 奥名懋一 Boe Oakner

Most netlabels veer towards electronic music, but Ano(t)raks takes the online-label model and applies it to another genre built on the spirit of “let’s just make something and put it out there” indie-pop. Started in 2012 by Dai Ogasawara, Ano(t)raks acts as a curator within a type of guitar-focused pop that never goes out of style across Japan, sifting through the twee masses to find the most interesting young artists around. They achieve this most clearly on their compilation albums, large collections casting the spotlight on all sorts of groups, hailing from Tokyo to tiny corners in the Western-most parts of Japan. Ano(t)raks has also served as a stepping-stone for groups such as Kyoto’s [Homecomings](#) and Osaka’s the Paellas en route to larger-label distribution opportunities.



### [Canata Records](#)



Whereas Ano(t)raks focuses solely on the Japanese indie-pop landscape, Tokyo-based Canata Records expands the boundaries of the genre generously. Founded by Azusa Suga and Yoshiaki Iwasawa, the netlabel spotlights indie-pop from all over the world, with releases coming from America ([Randy Johnson](#)), England ([Along Came December](#)), and Argentina ([Aguas Tonicas](#)), among others. Yet the bulk of releases come from Japanese outfits who aren't afraid to push Sarah-Records-inspired pop into weird directions, like recording a twee album using the synthesized voice of Vocaloid star Hatsune Miku. Co-founder Suga also fancies sub-genres such as chillwave and vaporwave, ignoring the perceptions of "coolness" abroad in favor of playing around with the sonic pillars of each. In the case of vaporwave, he's taken a niche corner of Internet music populated by Westerners goofing around with Japanese music, samples, and language, and turned it into an achingly nostalgic look back on youth.

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### [Tanukineiri Records](#)

House of Tapes: "Last Words" (via [SoundCloud](#))

[V.A. Tanukineiri Drink Sampler \(oribe\)](#) by Various Artists

Tanukineiri is one of the newest netlabels in Japan and it might point at the future of the scene. While the majority of Japanese netlabels—certainly the long-running ones—have had a central identity that shines through regardless of how wonky the (largely electronic) music gets, Tanukineiri ditches that template and simply releases whatever they fancy. They’ve uploaded dense four-on-the-floor dance music courtesy of Nagoya’s House of Tapes, rapturous folk strumming from Tokyo’s may.e, and lo-fi experimental sketches from Zaiden. They are globally minded, too, somehow becoming the place to go to hear Indonesian indie-pop such as [HoneybeaT](#) and [Tokyolite](#), and aren’t afraid to sell CDs of certain releases while giving the rest away for free.

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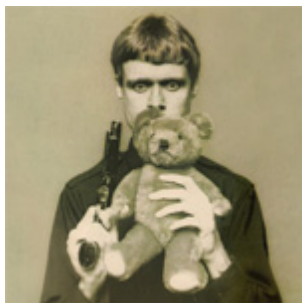
## [Kim Fowley: 10 Essential Tracks](#)

[Following his death at age 75, we revisit our recent primer on the unapologetically obnoxious rock'n'roll huckster Kim Fowley, who worked with everyone from the Modern Lovers to Ariel Pink across a 50-year career.](#)

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## [Trend Upsetters: 10 Essential Sparks Songs](#)

[For nearly 50 years, brothers Russell and Ron Mael have made a sport of crashing the zeitgeist, producing brilliantly skewed songs that both revel in and poke fun at pop convention. Stuart Berman details their career and offers a playlist of highlights.](#)



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## [Kim Fowley: 10 Essential Tracks](#)





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### [Premiered on Drake's "OVO Sound Radio" on Beats 1](#)

[By Matthew Strauss on January 30, 2016 at 7:22 p.m. EST](#)

## [Drake Shares "Summer Sixteen," Announces \*Views From the 6\* Will Be Out in April](#)

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[By Matthew Strauss on January 30, 2016 at 6:44 p.m. EST](#)

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# "Oh niggas must think I'm not petty cause I ...

By Eric Torres and Jeremy Gordon on January 27, 2016 at 2:33 p.m. EST

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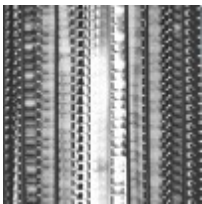
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## "Expansion Pact"

### Gun Outfit

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- Woods: "Sun City Creeps"

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- WOKE: "The Lavishments of Light Looking" [ft. George Clinton]
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- Cam & China: "Run Up"
- Jenny Hval: "Kingsize (Kelly Lee Owens Rework)"
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- Destroyer: "Times Square"
- Deafheaven: "Brought to the Water"
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- D.R.A.M.: "\$" [ft. Donnie Trumpet]
- Ash Koosha: "Harbour"
- Moses Sumney: "O Superman" (Laurie Anderson Cover)
- Toro Y Moi: "Pitch Black" [ft. Rome Fortune]
- Thundercat: "Them Changes"
- Blood Orange: "Do You See My Skin Through the Flames?"
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- Mikael Seifu: "The Lost Drum Beat"
- Dâm-Funk: "Free"
- Deradoorian: "A Beautiful Woman"
- Destroyer: "Dream Lover"
- USYN: "Daisy" (via MarginalRec.)
- mitsushige: "††† yAmAgAtA †††" (via Trekkie Trax)
- Pa's Lam System: "Bit by Bit" (via Maltine Records)
- bo en: "Miss You"
- mus.hiba: "hitomi" [ft. Abigail Press]
- tatsu: "hidden"
- Seimei & Taimei: "Mediterranean Blue"
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- Leggysalad: "entrance"
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- KlitoriX: "You Only Fuck Twice"
- gigandect: "divorce"
- House of Tapes: "Last Words"



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